

76.

The Dying S P E E C H O F

JAMES SHEPHEARD;

Who Suffer'd Death at TYBURN, *March* the 17th, 17¹⁷/₁₈;
Deliver'd by him to the Sheriff, at the Place of Execution.

I AM brought hither by the Almighty's Permission and the Usurper's Power, to whose Tyranny I thought to put an End, in order to facilitate my Lawful Sovereign's Return, and shorten the tedious Havock of a Civil War.

Whether the Principle on which I had conceiv'd this Deliverance to my Country, and Justice to my SOVEREIGN be really and strictly defensible or not, let who will canvass for me, tho' I can't help thinking, that if all and every Subject of these Realms were truly sensible of the Wrongs of their Prince and Country, the Reproach to their Faith, and the Disgrace to the *British* Name, and were as deeply touch'd with them as I am, I should then depart with an universal Approbation of my Countrymen, as I do with an absolute Perswasion of the Honesty and publick Spiritedness of my Intention.

As for those who are otherwise minded, who can help it; it would be lost Labour to contend with them. I shall therefore only give the World the true Motives which at first engaged me: And tho' they will not take with every Humour, and every Interest, yet am I well assured they will justify me thro' my dear SAVIOUR's Merits at his Righteous Bar, whether I am now going.

Where, but in my own Country, (O Blessed God receive me from it!) has a publick National Price been twice set on the Head of its Lawful Sovereign? And this by the Protestant Invaders of his, and his Subject's undoubted Rights: And can all this full length of Villany be allowed to such Invaders? And an hearty Subject to his Injur'd Prince not be allow'd, in vertue of his Allegiance, to strike the Ravager, let Equity itself pronounce.

The Earl of *Peterborough's* doubtful Message, I forbear to insist upon, because as yet it may be doubtful, the Hand of Time will clear it: But who can be Criminal to suspect an *Usurper* of Murder, the Sin that so easily besets him, and so well befits him? His destroying and reducing to Beggery those Gentlemen, with their Families, whom his General had receiv'd to Mercy, shews his utter want of any Notion of Honour, or Spirit, to Grace the Throne he has Usurp'd.

To invade the RIGHTS of a CHURCH, which he came chiefly on *Pretence of defending*, and of which he *feigns* himself a Member, is a prime Instance of his *Bangorian* Sincerity.

In short, to manage by Corruption, and barter away a brave People's Rights with their own Cash, to Rule a Nation with a Rod of Iron, and Rein it with a Halter, are strong lines of Government for the squeamish Constitution of *BRITONS*; and let this close the Character.

If these are Princely Qualities, and denote the true Vicegerent of Heaven, let the *British Annals* brand me.

I die a sincere, tho' an unworthy Member of the CHURCH of ENGLAND, as it stood before the Revolution, and from that CHURCH, her Articles, Liturgies and Homilies I have learned to abhor all KING KILLING and deposing DOCTRINES: What the adherers of this Government may think of this Asseveration, is the least of my Concern; I have only now to beg of the Almighty, my dear Redeemer, to pardon my Weakness in prescribing Means of his All-wise Providence and JUSTICE.

I now desire all, whom I have any way offended, to forgive me; but more particularly I ask pardon of the Reverend Mr. *Leak*, and all his Brethren, for my Rashness in supposing that he, or any of them, (who are all Strangers to me) could take Satisfaction in any sort of Revenge (tho' one) on the Guilty.

And here I think it proper to declare, that I never received any Instructions from, nor heard any thing of my Master, the Reverend Mr. *Hale*, tending to, or countenancing a dislike of this Government.

May it Please the Almighty to accept my earnest Desire to serve my Country; may he bless this Land, and its Rightful King, JAMES the Third; may he grant him a speedy recovery, and happy Issue from his Body, and a Glorious Reign: And Lastly, may he of his Infinite Goodness, and for the Sake of the Ever-Blessed Jesus, my Redeemer, receive me to his Mercy and Everlasting Rest.

O Lord! into thy Hands I commend my Spirit, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.

P. S. The World may please to take Notice, that no Allowance was any Way made to my plain Intimation in the Letter, that I wanted Authority and Commission, from my Lawful Sovereign, to have what I had conceived, in Execution; and that I had projected, first, to obtain such a Commission without which (the Intimation is strong) I intended not to act; so that if they on the Bench had any Candour, there was apparent Room to have shewn it.

But I have since learn'd that such a Commission would never be granted, being fully inform'd and assured, since my Confinement, that the KING has always disclaimed such Attempts, and in his DECLARATION, upon his going to Scotland, expressly forbid any such; which makes me, in the first Place, admire at the Greatness and Goodness of my PRINCE (the distinguishing, full, Mark of his Family) amidst so many Wrongs, and then regret my Ignorance of that Particular in his DECLARATION.

JAMES SHEPHEARD.